



## **King County**

### **Community Services Division**

#### **Department of Community and Human Services**

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### **Veteran Citizens Levy Oversight Board (VCLOB)**

#### **Meeting Summary**

**July 19, 2012 2-4 pm**

Northgate Library, Seattle, WA

#### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Douglas Hoople at 2:10 pm.

#### **Roll Call**

**Board Members Present:** - Stan Gunno - Acting Chair; Oren Hadaller; Robert Stephens, Jr.; Roger Welles; Bill Wood

**Board Members Excused/Absent:** Doug Hoople – Chair; Cynthia Lefever - Vice-Chair; Kathy Lewis

**King County Staff Present:** Laird Heia, Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS); Marcy Kubbs, DCHS; Terry Mark, DCHS; Linda Wells, DCHS

**Guests:** Steve Frederickson, Northwest Justice Project (NJP); Lauren Peach, NJP; Dennis Brown, Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA); Kathy Nysten, WDVA; Donald Lachman, WDVA; Steven Gill, WDVA; John Pruitt, African American Veterans Group Washington State (AAVGWS)

#### **Introductions**

Stan welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked those present to introduce themselves.

#### **Review of Meeting Summary**

The May 24, 2012 VCLOB meeting summary was approved as written.

#### **Implementation Plan Introduction**

Marcy Kubbs explained that in 2012 we began the process of asking program managers to update the implementation plans for their levy-funded activities that were continued into the 2012 - 2017 Levy. Board members have been reviewing these plans and receiving a report from the program managers on the current status of the activities. At this meeting presentations were provided on the following programs:

1. WDVA's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (Levy Activity 1.2.C Homeless veterans' street outreach). This program received \$84,000 in Veterans Levy funds and



\$125,857 in RCW, County Relief funds in 2012. Presenters were WDVA representatives Dennis Brown, Kathy Nylen, Donald Lachman, and Steve Gill.

2. Northwest Justice Project's Veterans Legal Assistance (Activity 1.5.B Veterans legal assistance). This program received \$20,000 in Veterans Levy funds. NJP presenters were Lauren Peach and Steve Frederickson.

### **Implementation Plan Review – 1.2.C Homeless veterans' street outreach –Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project**

Laird Heia, program manager for the Department of Community and Human Services, VHS Levy program explained that the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project is one of three outreach projects funded by the levy under Activity 1.2 Outreach and engagement to veterans. The other two projects are the veteran's phone resource project and outreach services to women veterans and veterans of color.

WDVA Reintegration Program Specialist, Dennis Brown related an experience to illustrate the impact of levy funding on veterans services. He attended a gathering of community veterans' providers back in the early 1990's and three providers showed up. Two months ago, at a similar type of gathering, the room was filled to capacity with veterans' services providers working collaboratively to provide services to veterans.

Kathy Nylen, WDVA, Reintegration Program Specialist explained how she and Dennis are on the front lines working with homeless veterans to link them to services. The WDVA call center, funded by Strategy 1.2.B is part of the coordinated effort to provide outreach services. Homeless veterans work with Dennis and Kathy who help them apply for appropriate benefits (through the King County Veterans Program and their satellite offices) and assist them in connecting to needed services.

Donald Lachman, WDVA Homeless Reintegration Program Manager, explained that the Levy funds three programs under his management – Homeless Veterans Reintegration, Veteran Information and Assistance Call Center, and Military Family Outreach. Together, these Levy-funded activities create an integrated system of outreach and referral assistance with Dennis and Kathy providing services to homeless veterans, Frank Dickinson and his team supporting the resource database and call center, and the two Military Family Outreach specialists.

### Discussion

In response to questions, the following information was shared:

- The King County Veterans Program (KCVP) and the WDVA have similar client intake assessment tools assisting in coordination between these programs.
- Steve Gill, WDVA Administrator explained they are continually improving their service to veterans through increased coordination and data sharing between the levy-funded WDVA programs and the KCVP.
- Kathy Nylen explained the process for confirming a veteran's eligibility for the program. If an individual is determined to be ineligible for services due to the nature of his/her discharge, Kathy will direct them to agencies that are able to provide services.
- Criminal justice issues are referred to the Veterans Incarcerated Program which was created by VCLOB member Bill Wood.

- Urban and rural vets may have different needs. The board indicated it is important to reach veterans where they live.

### **Implementation Plan Review – 1.5.B Veterans Legal Assistance Program – Northwest Justice Project (NJP)**

Linda Wells, program manager for the Department of Community and Human Services, VHS Levy and Community Services programs provided the board with an overview of the project. The program was originally funded with an annual allocation of \$12,000; the renewed Levy increased the annual allocation for this activity to \$20,000. The levy funds represent 25 percent of the Veterans Legal Assistance Program budget. Other funders include AmeriCorps and private sources.

The program is managed by the Northwest Justice Project which provides free civil legal services for low-income clients. During the last two years, 500 veterans were assessed for their legal assistance needs. Lauren shared that during her time with the Veterans Legal Assistance Program she learned a great deal about assisting veterans that was compiled into a document titled, *Representing Washington Veterans: Basic Legal and Cultural Concepts*, that is available on the Washington Law Help website at the following address: <http://washingtonlawhelp.com/WA/index.cfm>. The board thanked Lauren, who is leaving the program, for all her work on behalf of veterans.

### **Discussion**

- Levy funding allowed NJP to host a legal clinic in Pioneer Square. The NJP gathered a team of lawyers along with many other providers to assist veterans over a four-day period. A total of 50 veterans were served.
- NJP's AmeriCorps fellowship award was renewed for its third year. A new attorney will be hired by mid-August to replace Lauren.
- Board members expressed appreciation for the coordination occurring among the KCVP, WDVA and the NJP.

### **Strategy 1 Committee Report**

Strategy One Committee Chair Robert Stephens, Jr. reported on the June 11, Committee meeting. He raised a number of questions about Activity 1.2.A Outreach to Women Veterans and Veterans of Color and Levy staff agreed to discuss these with Robert after the meeting.

### **Update on Levy Fund Balance Ordinance**

Terry Mark, Deputy Director, Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) and Acting Director, DCHS, Community Services Division, provided an update on the Supplemental Appropriations Ordinance that addresses the 2006 – 2011 Levy fund balance. She thanked the board for their letter of support to the King County Council for the Executive's supplemental budget proposal.

### Discussion

- Board members and Levy staff discussed the ordinance process and the amount of fund balance. Board members again noted their support for the Aerospace and Veteran Employment Training Initiative.
- The next Council meeting scheduled to discuss the Levy Fund Balance Supplemental Appropriations Ordinance will be held on August 21 at 1:30 pm.

### **Staff Report**

- The letter of support from board members for the Executive's Levy Fund Balance Proposal was transmitted to Council.
- Councilmember McDermott sent an email to levy staff, thanking board members for their letter of support for the Executive's proposal.
- The Combined NOFA for Capital projects, Operating/Services and other services has been posted. Doug Hoople has agreed to represent the VCLOB on the review panel. Kate Slaminko will review for the RHSLOB.
- Levy staff attended a veteran's provider meeting hosted by El Centro de la Raza's Enhanced Outreach to Women Veterans and Veterans of Color staff. Many providers attended and had the opportunity to network.
- There will be no August VCLOB meeting. The next meeting will be a joint Levy oversight board meeting in September.
- Levy staff will keep board members informed of additional council meetings that involve the Levy Fund Balance Supplemental Appropriations Ordinance.

### **Old Business**

- None.

### **New Business**

- None.

### **Petitions/Communications (Public Comment)**

- None.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.